The Impact of Translation Market on Translator Training

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Abstract

When asked about the rationale behind training student translators, any translator teacher or trainer will immediately come out, essentially, with the following answer: we train them to work as (professional, competent, and/or skilled) translators in the translation market (TM). However, translation teachers in Translation Department of Al-Mustansiriya University (TDMU) in Iraq may admit the fact that the Dept. has been no longer capable of supplying the market with up-to-task (let alone professional) translators. Moreover, would-be-translators themselves could confess, when confronted by the real demands TM requires them to meet, that they are not empowered with the skills or, collectively, translation competence (TC) vital for them to live up to those demands.

Consequently, the questions arise are: (1) what are the characteristics of the market in question? (2) What are the demands it makes upon its future new bloods, i.e. the nature of TC it seeks out of our graduates? (3) What are the impacts it has on the way we train our future translators? (4) How could curriculum designers bridge the gap(s) between advances (therefore, more demands) in TM and their must-to-be-updated curriculum? And, finally, should they - curriculum designers- go local or universal in their consideration of the market under scrutiny?

1. Translation Market:

It goes undeniable that TM today is not that a few years ago; change hits almost every aspect of our world and this market is no exception (see Mayoral, 2001; Orsted, 2001:439; Wills, 2004:783-4), if not being one tool inter alia to drive and enhance the changes in other aspects of our world. Moreover, spurred by the idea of a small-village-globalized world, TM becomes a "big business" (see Bowker, 2004:960). In this respect, Wills (2004:777) holds that:

> Not only has it (translation) facilitated the understanding of sociocultural structures, economico-political systems, and technological/technical processes, it has also pushed forward our knowledge of the world (including our awareness of “otherness”) and widened our (inter-) linguistic and (inter-)cultural horizon.

In today’s dynamically changing society, it is easier said than done to characterize this market unequivocally. According to Aula.int (2005), it is difficult to foresee which sectors of society will demand most translations even in the medium-term future, given that the translations demanded are often closely related to the latest technology, such as mobile phone systems, or to technical innovations, as in the car industry (see also Duffus Langrell, 2001). Moreover, the client vs. translator traditional relation is changed, in Wills' words (2004:778), into “a client vs. server

relation” where ‘client’ stands for the public and the ‘server’ for the translation profession. He argues (ibid) that potential markets which are locally, regionally, or globally organized have fostered such a new relationship.

Such uneasily predictable changes in TM are the outcomes of a number of driving forces which are likely to be ideologically and politically motivated or triggered, of which outstandingly influential are (see Pym 1998; Kiraly, 2004):

- Globalization (Orsted (2001) adds what he calls *Euro Area*)
- Technology
- Multimedia-based communication (Internet, in particular)
- Localization

Why ideologically and politically motivated? In fact, the way our world is shaped today starts with a political decision to globalize it; naturally, this decision is ideologically motivated due to cultural differences that may feed ideological conflicts between powers seeking to dominate the world. To accomplish this goal (globalization), there must be tools to make the dream of a single unified society come true; the most powerful tool, among potentially many others, is the language mediation service, i.e. translation. However, I am not going any further to pursue this point deeply. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that the world makes qualitative leaps on almost all levels and Iraq translation community is at crossroads, having the choice to either cope or lag behind this world. It is believed that the best, reasonably sound choice is to benefit from the other's advances in the translation field.

Though seemingly separate, the above driving forces of the TM are, nevertheless, organically connected in terms of, at least, two types of relations, either a cause-effect or a means-end relation; globalization, for instance, may be seen as the effect of the technological advances whereas technology, virtual communication, and localization stand for means to an end, namely, globalization.

The world as 'a small village' is nowadays a catchword thanks to the easiness of communication made available via the internet or satellites. In this regard, Pym (1998; see also Orsted, 2001:439) holds that:

> As a result of new technologies and the increasingly blurred economic borders, the translation services required by a company, an institution, or a client are not confined by geographical boundaries.

In what follows, the outstanding features characterizing the global market of translation will be investigated in an attempt to pinpoint the kind of skills or competences required and expected out of the future translator by the market in question.

1.1. Dynamically changeable TM:

By deciding on today characteristics or norms of the TM, one may think that it is the end of the line. In fact, it is not so; change is the norm and dynamism of this market; as new technologies are always all along the line, new software translation tools are constantly produced (Orsted, 2001:439), new channels of communication emerge, ideologies marry or conflict, and many other reasons. The translator, the trainer, and the course designer must be always on alert about and updated of the new-comings in their field. This stretches to our concept of the translation phenomenon that should be seen as being changeable and the market needs we identify will therefore require a dynamically incessant evaluation (Gabr, 2001) and revision (see Kiraly, 2004).

Furthermore, the changeability of TM is principally manifested itself as a change in expectations (translator community's, employers', clients', academia's, etc.) triggered by diverse factors influencing the translation field and its related interdisciplinary fields and by new insights from the theory of translation or the widely used term 'translation studies'. Thus, with the advent of the internet and its instantaneous access to information, the TM employers would expect the new bloods to have been trained to use the computer and surf the information-rich internet.

1.2. Multimedia market:

Most of us are accustomed to the traditional image of the translator working alone with a stuff of paper dictionaries, tracing the meaning of a word, or struggling with a sentence structure and/or style. However, this image is nowadays globally reduced to a translator working on his workstation, i.e. a well equipped computer unit (Mayoral, 2003; Jekat & Massey, 2003). From their angle, clients would expect the translation service supplier, a freelance or employed translators, to have a relatively modern computer with a high-quality printer, connection to internet to receive and send their work, software programs that may go well beyond standard word processors, and consist of presentation packages, web page editing packages, spreadsheets, TACT-Text Analysis Computing Tools, etc (see Duffus Langrell, 2001; Pym 2007). All these and other profession-related tools are nowadays necessary for the professional translator to carry out his/her job properly, quickly, and easily. Not only this, some translators have invested/traded in translation tools such as on-line-access- or software dictionaries and encyclopedias or similar resources on CDs, memory programs, corpus management software, glossaries, and the like.

Moreover, thanks to the advent of the internet and other communication media (IT industry), TM is nowadays usefully decentralized, going beyond geopolitical boundaries (Orsted, 2001:439); this results in translation tasks being commissioned and done, either instantly or scheduled, via the web; on-call translators, freelancers and/or employed, are there waiting for the

prospective client. It is a virtual world of translation, in a word (see Orsted, 2001:439; Pym, 2003; Mayoral, 2003; Aula.int, 2005).

1.3. Speed-aiming TM:

Time is money and the TM, like all other markets, being nourished with advanced technology (Aula.int, 2005), aims at speeding up its production by, for example, requiring its employees "working under pressure" and "meeting tight deadlines" (see Duffus Langrell, 2001; Chriss, 2002; Bowker, 2004:970). Investigating translation from the employers' perspective by analyzing a database of job advertisements, Bowker (2004:970) comes out with the above two results, depicting them as being a sign of the employers' desire to increase productivity. Moreover, from the customers' angle, Orsted (2001, 439) gives a different *because* where she holds that the customers' constant push for tighter deadlines is prompted by the fact that "they see translation as an afterthought in too many organizations or markets, even big ones". Technology and the translation software in general render the translator's job easier and encourage employers and customers imposing unrealistically short deadlines of delivery. Consequently, the daily total volume of translation is increasingly growing at an incredible rate (Aula.int, 2005) and technology has changed the translation activities into something like projects (Pym, 2007) rather than one-man task. Yet, speed or short deadlines may pose their own problems; one, among potentially others, is essentially the conflict that may be sparked between quality and quantity of translation (see Orsted, 2001:439; Wyler, 2003:5-6; Pym, 2007).

The technological tools permit an increase in speed, but sometimes at the cost of quality if they are not duly used and adapted to the particular needs/norms set by the translation service provider. The demand for speed is unrelenting as the TM becomes competitively even fiercer (Duffus Langrell, 2001). So the translator is caught between the claim for speed and the personal ambition of delivering the ultimate quality. Would the two ever meet? This is a fundamental question (Orsted, 2001:439). However the market generates its own mechanisms to ensure a quality product.

1.4. High Quality-demanding:

Quality can be attributed to every facet of the translation phenomenon, be it a process, product, or players taking part therein; there should be a quality translator, process, product, and even a quality client, one who is after a quality product (see Rico-Pérez, 2002). From the client's angle, quality reflects the satisfaction he/she/it gets thanks to having their translation project best served and fully met in accordance with specifications first initiated in the translation brief (Nord, 1997:75; Jekat & Massey, 2003). Bonthrone & Partnerschaft (1996:3-4) speak of quality as referring to "an integration of the features and characteristics which determine the extent to which output satisfies the customer's needs". Beich (1994: 25 in Gabr, 2001) holds that "quality is the

measure of satisfaction that occurs between a customer and supplier that only they can define". Arevalillo (2008) gives the core of a number of definitions of quality in two words "customer's satisfaction". Consequently, the translator must provide quality translation and the client is expecting him to do so (Hönig, 1997:15; Kunschak, 2006). However, this may sound quite different from Gouadec's argument set in favor of teaching students "how, and how far, to compromise on quality when the money is too short or the time delay impressively insane - and, incidentally?" (Gouadec, 2000).

Brunette (2000:173) provides a thorough account of the different methods used for quality testing in TM. She identifies five different procedures: (a) *didactic revision*, or formative revision, intended as a careful comparison of source and target texts with the aim of improving translator's skills; (b) *translation quality assessment* (TQA), related to management techniques and performed over a portion of the translated text with the aim of measuring productivity or quality according to a predefined checklist; (c) *quality control*, which is also an instrument for management purposes and ensures the compliance of the final translation, i.e. translation as a product, with a set of requirements, norms, and criteria established in advance; (d) *pragmatic revision*, usually performed by an individual reviser who does not have contact with the translation and whose aim is to improve the final version; and (e) *fresh look*, which considers the translation as an independent text that has to conform to target readers' expectations. In practice, however, quality assurance in the translation industry is usually identified with certifications such as DIN 2345 and ISO 9002 (see Kiraly, 2000:148-51). Due to space limitations, the reader, willing to learn about the quality assurance in today TM, is referred to Bonthrone (1996:3-4) Orsted (2002:443-4), and Rico-Pérez (2002).

Nevertheless, it is worth referring to here that quality is often not a one-man responsibility or outcome but the result of the cooperation and collaboration of many people involved in the same task, ranging from the client, the translation project manager, the translator(s), the proofreader and potentially other players who, most often than not and especially in big-volume translation projects, work as a team (see Rico-Pérez, 2002).

<u>1.5. Teamwork-based:</u>

In real-life situations, translators, most often than not, do not work in vacuum. There are always contacts with colleagues, clients, and other professionals to help find certain information, solutions, field-specialists' guidance, etc (Pym, 1998; Kiraly, 2003). For instance, Translators translating for the manufacturer who globally expands his product will be asked to translate that product's manual into different pivot languages in addition to the language of the targeted country (usually English, Arabic, French, Russian or German); therefore, they are likely to work in teams with translators of different language pairs if they are to maintain the text cohesion and/or coherence (Mayoral, 2003).

Moreover, teamwork is conditioned by the size of the translation project in question; if it is large scaled with a tight deadline for submission, it will be urgently appealing for more than a pair of hands to handle it (see Pym, 2007). However, the teamwork aspect normally characterizes the work of agencies and/or institutions in general but, usually, not freelancers. Furthermore, to secure a maximum level of quality translation, the team working on the translation project may be composed of the translator(s), technical experts, quality assessment specialists, editors, proof-readers, and the translation manager (as the last ring of the chain out of his/her hands the project is usually handed over to the client (Arlecchino Xpress, 2002). In such a case, the project manager draws up a work plan and assigns the project participants (being translators, technical experts, quality assessment specialists, editors, and proof-readers) their individual project-related tasks. It is imperative that each task be performed by separate individuals or groups of individuals, so that the objectivity of the work assessment is not impaired and that efficiency is guaranteed (Arlecchino Xpress, 2002; Rico Preze, 2002). Nonetheless, by virtue of the specialized information he/she/it might be asked to supply, the client can be depicted as part of the teamwork. In the case of the freelancer, he/she may play most of the roles above.

In the teamwork-centered market environment, one may observe that the translator's choices are constrained by the client's needs, the project manager's understanding of those needs, the translators understanding of the needs as they are briefed by the project manager, the translation project nature, and the teamwork members as a collective perception of the overall translation project. In fact in such an environment, problems, whether external or internal to the translating act, are sure to emerge. The solution lies in the consensus-directed dialogue of Man, i.e. in the sound cooperation/collaboration of the team members (for more detailed account of these two concepts and the merits and demerits of teamwork, the reader is referred to Sultan, 2007:61).

1.6. Localization-dominated TM:

> Commercial initiatives have gone beyond geopolitical boundaries and nowadays any company bent on success in the marketplace must cross borders, advertise its products abroad, and participate in international trade. This is not an option, but a means for survival (Orsted, 2001:439).

According to Pym (2003), the term 'localization' was firstly used in commerce and marketing, referring to "the process during which a general (internationalized) product is adapted to the needs of a locale, which is associated with a specific culture and specific linguistic characteristics". In line with Pym's statement, Orsted (2001:439; see also Aula.int, 2005; Charalampidou, 2006) defines localization as "that particular part of the translation industry,

where electronic products are translated and transformed (adapted) into another product targeted on a local market (locale) (Orsted, 2001:439).

Read from the product angle (a web site for example), localization can be seen as a further register-based type of translation like the commonly mentioned ones, literary, legal, scientific, etc. However, from the process point of view, it may stand as a third type in the well-known bi-classification of the translation phenomenon into interpreting and translation (see Mayoral, 2003) due to different reasons, of which most vivid are that the translation process carried out is aided by the networked(less) computer (i.e. CAT) and the fact that the translator/interpreter working online may practice both translation and interpretation at the same time given the possibility of direct contact with the client and of medium-switching (spoken and/or written) (see Charalampidou, 2006). Charalampidou (ibid.) in this respect holds that "one could not state that this new process (localization) annuls the process of translation but rather integrates it as a part of a wider context". Moreover, the fact that the producer of such a kind of translation needs to be essentially equipped with skills (basically computer-centered) different from those the interpreter and the traditional translator have should also account for and substantiate this new type of translation (see Pym, 2003; Kis, 2006).

Additionally, localization stands as a major factor that accounts for the TM rapid growth. It is by adapting its website to its target consumers' language, needs, and culture that any company could be really said to go/be global and that it would evidently care for its global market (Aula.int, 2005; Charalampidou, 2006). Psychologically and lingually speaking, though the majority of the world companies tend to use English language as their lingua franca, the interaction of the language users with a website on the internet becomes more direct and appealing when its content is cast in their mother tongue (Charalampidou, 2006). This is also evidenced by the fact that global companies would not expect the total of its prospective consumers to speak English as their lingua franca. This results in lingua franca**s** rather than one English lingua franca and in web sites that are written in different languages rather than only one language. Thus, it could be concluded that the localization process, done through a powerful means of communication like the internet, significantly minimizes the role of English as a lingua franca. Multilingualism rather than bilingualism is the norm of the day (see ibid.).

The localized translation brings into the translator's environment diversities of new tools, I venture to claim, unknown for the majority of Iraqi translation educators, including the researcher, let alone their students; examples of those software tools are translation memories, terminology management and other knowledge management tools (for example corpus management software), voice input software such as Dragon Systems' Naturally Speaking or IBM's Via Voice, concordance software, TACT-Text (Analysis Computing Tools), and potentially many others (see Orsted, 2001:439; Duffus Langrell, 2001; Chriss, 2002; Pym, 2003; Aula.int, 2005). Moreover, translators capable of using the computer have been already well

acquainted with translation software packages (Babylon, Systran, LEC Translate Arabic, Easylingo, Lingosoft, Al-Wafi, and many others).

Such new tools, generally associated with the localization process, involve translators in activities quite different from the usual stuff they are traditionally accustomed to (simple translation of the content of the SLT). Under the umbrella of localization, translators are called upon to do much more than merely translating: documentation, terminology, rewriting (Pym, 2003), project management (see Rico Perez, 2002; Bowker, 2004:971), multimedia-related tasks (websites contains not only texts but also images, therefore audio, video and editing, or the basic skills thereof) are required out of the translator) (see Mayoral, 2003; Aula.int, 2005). I may close this with a quotation from Orsted (2001: 439):

> Not only proficient language command in both source- and target languages is required out of today translators, but also, equally important, they must bring together knowledge and skills that belong to different disciplines, such as documentation, terminology, desktop publishing, as well as some knowledge of specialized texts.

2. The Impacts of TM on Translator Training in TDMU:

The first question to raise here is that "do we really have a TM in the strict sense of the word?". A snapshot comparison between the global profile of TM and Iraq's local one would immediately and unfortunately come out with negative results, marking our local TM as shapeless and drastically lagging behind. One essential clue to the negative side of the answer is that there are no Iraqi translation firms or agencies that can be said to shape this market; still the observer may notice that there are photocopying shops which offer translation services (most often carrying out by one or two translators), but are legally unaccountable for their translation outputs. After ousting Saddam's regime by USA, the translation market witnesses the emergence of one of the American outstanding translation company, namely, Titan (see Beninatto & DePalma, 2005). At the beginning, this company makes heavy demands for interpreters rather than text-translators, putting them into tests before enrolling them into real life jobs. Doing so, it echoes the actual demands of the Iraq TM at that time when American troops basically need interpreters to move with them and help them communicate with Iraqis. Further, it assures its clients a quality translator or interpreter capable, though relatively, of satisfying their demands. I may venture to say that the existence of USA and the multinational forces, or coalition forces whatsoever, though indirectly, reveals academic deficiencies in, and calls for second thoughts on, the way our translator is trained or prepared to address tomorrow's demands.

However, had we considered all the bad circumstances Iraq in general and the educational process therein in particular went through, this is no wonder at all. Moreover, the depreciating of

the translation education in Iraq is voiced out louder and louder by many Iraq translation scholars. Most recently, in a translation symposium organized by Baytul Hikma here in Iraq under the heading of "واقع تدريس الترجمة في الجامعات العراقية", a number of teachers, translation scholars, and professional translators in the field identify serious deficiencies in the academic teaching of translation (Baytul Hikma, 2007:60-75). Below are some of the weaknesses they recognize in relation to the impacts TM has on the way we train the future professionals (ibid; also cf. Sirriyya, 2003:ch5; Sultan, 2007:ch6):

- The courses offered in TDMU are outdated and cannot be claimed to be helpful in creating up-to-date translation professionals out of our students.
- Translation teaching focuses on the English – Arabic direction rather than the reverse; this tendency in translation teaching falls short of, particularly after 2003 (the overthrow of Saddam's regime), meeting the TM increasing demands of competently bilingual translators/interpreters to mediate, for instance, between American troops and Iraqis.
- Translation students are barely native speakers of their mother tongue, standard Arabic
- The TDMU admission policy with respect to the morning classes overlooks the student's will to join the department, taking their secondary school total average and their marks in both English and Arabic(must be 70 upward) as the fundamental criteria to accept them. Moreover, unlike students of the evening classes, morning classes' students would not be usually subjected to the admission test or interview.
- The majority of the TDMU first year students do not have the minimum of English competence; in other words, students graduating from the secondary school are not qualified to pursue their university degree in translation because they do not have the least of English communicative skills.
- Some teachers are not ideal or qualified to do the teaching task.
- Class-sizes are too large, typically over 50 students a class.
- Translators are underpaid.

In what follows the researcher will outline some of the impacts/implications that can be drawn out of the TM characteristics mentioned so far. It is believed that unless translation educators carefully read, and occasionally review and update their knowledge of the TM that their students will ultimately join, they would not be successful in: (1) identifying/updating their concept of the TC or skills required (2) designing their course requirement accordingly (3) deciding on the educational policy best suits their students and that market needs, and (4) producing up-to-date autonomous translation professionals. The impacts/implications can be realized on various levels or aspects of the translation phenomenon and education. Let's start with the TC.

2.1. Translation Competence:

Two assumptions underlie this subsection; the first is that trainers are training their students for a potential TM and the second is a function of the following question "what kind of skills our students need to acquire to meet the demands of that market?" It is unquestionable fact that translation institutes are the legitimate suppliers of professional translators for the TM employers. A significant prerequisite for any training program designer or trainer therefore is that he/she has a clear picture of what skills or competencies future translators need to acquire in order for them to be best qualified to meet tomorrow's TM's demands. It is only through surveying and pinpointing those demands that the translation program designer and/or the trainer are said to be on solid grounds and up-to-date with respect of the what, who, how, when, where, etc. questions of the translator training. Both, the designer and trainer, have to dynamically cope with the market demands, reflecting them in the curriculum or syllabus items and the educational process environment in general (see Kiraly, 2005).

A corollary to the above statement is that it is totally unreasonable of the respective translation institutes to produce handicapped translators, so to speak, who are incapable of working in increasingly technology-based/driven TM where the first requirement made on the newcomer translator is that of ability to work on computer; however, working on the computer in this context would not mean the translators' ability to log on (off), surfing the internet, doing chats or the like; it fundamentally points out to his/her competence when it comes to using translation-related software (collectively referred to as the translator's workstation).

TM is just one resource among potentially others (norms of the professional translators' community, the current language approach, translation theory or studies, teaching/learning philosophy (essentially associated with knowledge acquisition)) that can be used by educators to build their concept of what constitutes translation skills, or in line with the approach taken here, TC. Nevertheless, TM would help them (educators) a lot delineate the components of TC in question. For example, through learning that the market strongly prefers CAT-trained candidates, the educator must make CAT as part of his applicable curriculum. Moreover, being aware that his would-be-translators would never do without their normal tools (reference material, encyclopedias, or dictionaries whether in paper or electronic), the educator must devote lessons in his total curriculum plan to hone the future professionals' instrumental competence (see the TC components in the present subsection).

However, by and large, no accepted model of what makes up TC or its acquisition exists in the field of Translation Studies (Shreve, 1997: 121, in Alves et al. 2000:46; PACTE, 2000; Pym, 2000b; Orozco & Albir Hurtado, 2002:375; Wu, 2005). Yet, the reader of the respective literature may come across some proposals made with respect to TC in written translation. Most of them,

nonetheless, are limited in scope as they consider only specific aspects of TC (see Waddington, 2001), whereas, paradoxically, others are accused of being too wider in scope to be covered in a translation curriculum, hence, raising discrepancies over an acceptable definition of this concept.

In order not to reinvent the wheel and debate things other scholars have already hammered out and since their works can be easily consulted, a start from where others end may cut a long story short (for an all-inclusive discussion of TC concept, the reader is referred to Pym (2000b). In the present study, PACTE's component-based model of TC, relatively the most complete, relevant, and productive particularly in a pedagogical sphere, will be highlighted, adopted, and adapted (see PACTE, 2000 and 2003) and for the reasons that justify the researcher's choice and more about this concept, the reader is referred to Sultan (2007:148-54)).

2.1.1. PACTE's Model of Translation Competence:

PACTE's model of TC is based on the assumption that translators are embedded in a complex network of social and professional activity (see PACTE 2000, 2003). From this perspective, translators should not be seen as anonymous language lackeys passively transferring a message from one language to another but as mediators who are actively constructing meaning cross(lingually) culturally (see Kiraly, 2000:13).

TC is defined by the group as "the underlying system of knowledge, aptitudes and skills necessary for the translator in order to be able to translate" (PACTE 2000 and 2003; see also Martinez & Hurtado Albir, 2000: 279). According to PACTE (2003), this competence has four distinctive characteristics: (1) it is expert knowledge and not possessed by all bilinguals; (2) it is basically procedural (operative, i.e. knowing how) knowledge; (3) it is made up of various interrelated sub-competencies; (4) the strategic component is very important, as it is in all procedural knowledge (see also Orozco & Albir Hurtado, 2002:376). It consists of six sub-competences: communicative competence, extra-linguistic competence, psychophysiological competence, instrumental-professional competence, transfer competence, and strategic competence (PACTE, 2003). In this vein, Massey (2005:627; see also Wu, 2005) maintains that these sub-competences are as continuously evolving as the TM needs plus interactively feeding into and off one another, each with a cluster of sub-components. To this inventory of competences, the researcher adds a further one, namely, 'the autonomy competence' (see Sultan, 2007:150-54). These sub-competences will be tackled below.

2.1.1.1. Language Competence:

In PACTE's TC model, this competence takes different names (communicative, linguistic, and bilingual); but since it emphasizes the linguistic aspects of TC and, consequently, depends on the language approach taken to analyze the text language, the term 'language competence' is preferred over others (cf. PACTE, 2003). Language competence in two languages (i.e. SL and TL) is defined by PACTE (ibid.) as "the system of underlying knowledge and skills necessary for linguistic communication. The sub-components to be brought under this competence are subject to the language approach the translation institute stresses in its curriculum. In TDMU case, Quirk's et al "University Grammar of a Student" (1973) and Chalker's "Current English Grammar" (1984) are engendered; both are sentence-based grammar books, taking from different schools of grammar (but cf. Quirk's et al ch.14 where some textual aspects are highlighted); Crystal's "What is Linguistics" (1971) and Atchison's "Teach yourself Linguistics" (1987) are the linguistics textbooks selected to feed the trainees with linguistic knowledge; the semantics side of the curriculum is covered by Palmer's 1980 book entitled "Semantics"; and finally, the conversational skills are taught through Ockenden's (1972) "Situational Dialogues" which are no longer situational given that life situations are subject to change from one generation to another. However, one shortcoming that all these textbooks share is that they are all outdated. Furthermore, Schäffner (1999:99) and PACTE (2003:92) hold that this competence is made up of pragmatic, socio-linguistic, textual and lexicogrammatical knowledge in each language. In fact, the major argument in this context is whether the language side of the TDMU's curriculum covers the already mentioned linguistic aspects or not. According to the TDMU staff responsible for teaching the above textbooks, they are too old and narrow in scope to cover the language competence requirements. Even more critical is the fact that the textbooks enveloped in the staff's syllabus fall short of underlining the role of text and providing the analytic tools whereby the translation students can realize the text meaning as a coherent and cohesive whole. In other words, there is no reference to text linguistics- and/or discourse analysis- oriented material that could serve as an analytic tool for the student translators. Also of no less significance in this regard is the fact that the above textbooks are not written with the translator in mind, i.e. they essentially belong to their specific branches of linguistics. It would be much more helpful for the students to find them textbooks that are composed and basically directed toward the translator (cf. Hatim, and Mason's book of 1990 "Discourse and the Translator" or their book of 1997 "The Translator as Communicator" where both are concerned with linguistic issues but with the translator in mind).

Before jumping to the second sub-competence, one more relevant point should be underscored. Faber (1998:9-10) maintains that translation students should already possess a satisfactory level of command of their two working languages when they begin their studies (which is, in fact, typically not the case in TDMU, see Sirriyya (2003: ch.6); and Sultan

(2007:257-62) where this point is empirically validated). A corollary to insufficient command of one of, or, his two languages, the student translator will eventually display poor performance in his translation activities (naturally in translating from the translator’s native language into the foreign language). For PACTE (2000:103), language competence means comprehension and expression in the translator’s mother tongue where this also holds true in the case of the foreign language he has acquired. This has its bearings on the TDMU's admission policy where the candidates must be strictly tested to assure a certain level of language competence.

2.1.1.2. Extra-linguistic Competence:

This competence comprises two types of knowledge, general world knowledge and specialist knowledge, which can be triggered by the translator according to the needs of each translation situation PACTE (2003:92). This component of TC is highly realized in terminology-centered translation types. Scientific and legal translations for example are well known as specialized types of translation thanks to the fact that they require a specialist (-like) knowledge, at least, in the subject matter or register of the translated text. Beside register knowledge (see Nkwenti-Azeh 1998: 160, in Martinez et al, 2001:689), and knowledge about the theory of translation (about the principles that govern the translation of text (units of translation, processes required, methods and procedures in translation, types of problems etc.) can be subsumed under the specialist category; this knowledge is realized in the TDMU's program basically by two courses: the first course is entitled "Translation Principles" taken by the first year students where they have two textbooks to work with: Farghal & Shunnaq’s, 1999 “Translation with Reference to English and Arabic” and Aziz & Lataiwish’s 2000 “Principles of Translation”; the second is entitled "Theories of Translation" taken by the fourth year students where they work on three outdated textbooks: Catford's "Linguistic Theory of Translation" of 1965, Newmark's "Approaches to Translation" of 1980, , and Allyas’ 1989 "Theories of Translation". Ironically, the first year course textbooks are subjectively named by the course teacher to overcome the temporal gap that can be clearly recognized in the fourth year's textbooks which are at least 18 years lagging behind the advances in the translation theories or studies. Plus being evidently deficient in content, the TDMU's specialized knowledge program is marked with confusion and malcoordination due to the incompatibility between what is taught in the first year and the fourth. Thus one pressing need is to reconsider and update the program in general.

Apparently, the general world knowledge, i.e. bicultural and encyclopedic knowledge (Martinez & Hurtado Albir, 2001:279; PACTE, 2003:92-3), is set to be developed on individual grounds since there are no clear items in TDMU program to cover this type of knowledge. In addition to being bilingual, translators urgently need to be bicultural and encyclopedic. Cultural knowledge is considerably important in TM due to the fact that there is nowadays some kind of cultural infusion and today translators need no more than a button press to get into contact with a person belonging to a different culture. Translators may be asked to translate a website where

they should adapt the translated (localized) text (website) culturally to fit the target culture (see Charalampidou, 2006). Wouldn't it be more helpful for the student translators to be exposed right from the classroom to that other's culture (see Kiraly, 2000:42-3)? I think the logic of the answer sides with 'yes'.

Unfortunately, translator specialization has not been duly considered in the TDMU's educational policy and no one can claim for certain that the department feeds the current TM with specialized translators fully fledged with regard to their exralinguistic competence. One theory in this respect is that the fourth year of the TDMU program is totally devoted for the specialization part of the program where students could be asked to decide on the type of specialized translation course they would like to join; such a course may be divided into theoretical and practical lessons with the possibility of the practical lessons to be out-class activities. Here too, some coordination with the government circles that may benefit from the translator's specialization in the future may be carried out, i.e. part of the translator training must be situationally done and the students could be asked (or the TDMU could take the role) to find government or private circles that are ready to either host the students or offer them jobs after graduating (see Kiraly, 2005). It is only by making the trainees coexist in places similar to or representing their real workplaces that the trainer feels certain that his students are exposed to authentic real life problems which they may encounter after getting outside of the university walls where there is no teacher to stand by to help.

2.1.1.3. Instrumental-Professional Competence:

It refers to the knowledge and skills related both to the tools of the trade and the profession (PACTE, 2000:103). The sub-components may be very diverse: knowledge and use of all kinds of information resources, and translation technologies, knowledge of the labor market (business acumen, payment, translation management, translation briefs, time management etc.), awareness of the translator's professional rights and duties (see PACTE, 2000:103; Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005:162), and the professional conduct or ethics of translators (PACTE, 2000:103; Martinez & Hurtado Albir, 2001:279; Jekat & Massey, 2003), their professional standards (Kiraly, 2000:147-50), and adaptability to TM changes and demands (the translator must always have ways to update his knowledge and tune it to the market needs (Wu 2005). Kiraly (2000:13) holds in this context that translators must have a professional self-concept, "a thoughtful awareness of their duty as active participants in a complex communicative process" where they serve a key role that can significantly affect the degree of success of the translated texts or the translation process in general (ibid).

Most of the above facets of this competence are not addressed by the TDMU's curriculum. For example, translators' ethics and instruments are both barely considered in the TDMU's program. There is no course item or textbook to enlighten the future translators with the ethics

they should have or abide by when they are engaged in the reality of their profession; by the same token, translators are not allowed to use dictionaries neither in their daily classrooms nor in their tests. It is implausible to deprive the student of the instruments/dictionaries (regardless of being in paper or electronic) which professional translators (or his teachers themselves) usually cannot do a translation (particularly when it comes to doing a scientific translation) without consulting or using them.

2.1.1.4. Psycho-physiological Competence:

This sub-competence can be defined as the ability to use all kinds of psychomotor (skills for reading and writing), cognitive (e.g. memory, attention span, creativity and logical reasoning) and attitudinal resources (e.g. intellectual curiosity, rigor, a critical acumen, teamwork readiness, aesthetic sensitivity, and self-confidence), (PACTE, 2000:103; Wu, 2005). In this respect, the observer may notice that there is no due attention given to this side of the translator's TC in TDMU's admission policy or the tests and/or the interviews made to that effect. Here, the test designer or the educator concerned may require consultancy from other interdisciplines, particularly from the field of psychology.

2.1.1.5. Strategic Competence:

According to PACTE (2003; see also Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005:162), strategic competence is primarily responsible for carrying out the problem-solving process; it accommodates all the individual procedures, conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal, used to solve the translation problems detected during the translating process. A definition of the translation problem, moreover, can be drawn from Nord (1997: 151) who defines it as “an objective problem which every translator … has to solve during a particular translation task. However, problems encountered by the translators are varied and a working classification of them can be made in relation to the particular competence that the translator needs to mobilize. Consequently, problems that translators may face during their daily life of the translation job are not necessarily associated with the text-under-translation, but may be related to some facet of the entire translation process, for example, the price negotiation, deadline of delivery, etc; things that are not translating process-specific per se.

In addition to detecting, identifying, and solving translation problems, the strategic competence can be viewed as the most important tool translators have to guarantee the efficiency of the overall translation process (Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005:162). It plays a central role in planning the process in relation to the translation project, evaluating the process and unfinished results obtained, triggering the diverse sub-competencies and compensating for shortcomings therein (Kiraly, 2000, 133-139; PACTE, 2003:82). It plays a role similar to that of a coordinator. One realization of this competence is when translators generate more than one translation of the

same text, then, trying to decide on just one and the most appropriate one. Unfortunately, today translation classes in TDMU are not encouraging such a practice or teaching methodology and the final decision on the best translation to adopt or a solution to make in general will be the teacher's or the one he accepts (cf. Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005). Democracy may have a voice to raise here; it is believed that all the teaching/learning process parties should be democratically educated to accept the other's solutions cooperatively and collaboratively (Sultan, 2007:61).

2.1.1.6. Transfer Competence:

Beside strategic competence, it is the pivotal competence that integrates all the others. It is the ability to complete the transfer process from the ST to the TT (Martinez & Hurtado Albir, 2001:279; PACTE, 2002:43), i.e. to understand the ST and re-express it in the TL, taking into account the translation’s register, text type, purpose, readership, function and environment. The sub-components include (1) comprehension ability (the ability to analyze, synthesize and activate extra-linguistic knowledge so as to capture the sense of a text), (2) the ability to “deverbalize”, (i.e. to keep the text as an “image” and to simultaneously control interference between the ST and TT, (3) re-expression competence (textual organization, creativity in the TL), (4) competence in carrying out the translation project (the choice of the most adequate strategies). Neubert (2000: 6 in PACTE, 2000: 102) identifies this competence as the one which joins together all the others and as the major distinguishing attribution of the translator, represents the ability to produce an adequate transfer from ST to TT, and establishes bridges or linking mechanisms between the translator’s working languages(see also Massey, 2005:627: Wu 2005). However, in the case of CAT, the transfer process can be conducted by the machine and all the translator has to do is to edit the outcome translation, using all the above transfer-specific skills. This is the major deficiency of TDMU's curriculum where there is no reference of whatsoever kind to CAT, a feature that outstandingly characterizing the global TM nowadays. Moreover, the majority (if not all) of the TDMU's staff are not trained to that effect and there is no one staff member (to the best of the researcher's knowledge, being a staff member of TDMU) specialized in such a type of translation.

2.1.1.7. Autonomy Competence:

It is an addition to PACTE’s set of competences (see Sultan, 2007:153); it refers to the translator’s ability to develop self-reliance, editing and evaluating skills (cf. Kiraly, 2000, 133-139; Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005:162), research talent (cf. Schäffner, 1999:99), and independence in their life-long learning, i.e. being self-updating (cf. Wu, 2005); the student translators should make their way as autonomous learners capable of taking decisions whenever and wherever the case requires so becuse in real-life practice there will be no teachers standing by to help (Kiraly, 2000:20; Orozco & Albir Hurtado, 2002:377; Jekat & Massey, 2003; Davies & Scott-Tennent, 2005:169-70). Autonomy competence does not mean that translators have to take

their decisions on individual grounds, but they must develop parallel collaborative and cooperative abilities (Kiraly, 2000:36). They must be interpersonally capable and ready to professionally join the translators' community.

2.2. The Educational Philosophy:

If we believe that translation students must be trained in a way that makes them capable of acting autonomously in real life translation situations, then we should believe that our educational method or the philosophy underlying it must bring reality to the class. The teaching methodology must be far fetched from being a process of knowledge-transmission versus passive listening (knowledge-receiver) or, generally, one that encourages a totally teacher-centered class where students are all ears with their tongues making no pulse. Dewey (cited in Vanderstraeten & Biesta, n.d.), well known as the greatest proponent of situated learning and a representative of the social constructivism theory of knowledge building, states that "education is not preparation for life, it is life itself" (see also Duffy & Cunningham, 2001). He (see Kliebard, 1986:20) believes that education must echo the changing needs of society and start from life including vocations, rather than learning vocations, i.e. we learn science, language, math, translation, etc. through vocations. This is similar to what is termed 'anchored instruction', where learning takes place in larger communities or social contexts (Duffy & Cunningham, 2001). Various lessons could be obtained out of Dewey's words: students should play a role in their learning/teaching process; they must be (encouraged to be) active members of the community they are to join on graduation right from the class and not before that (cf. Kiraly, 2005), and reality must be as fully brought to the class as possible, for instance, if the reality dictates that the translator will work on a computer or use dictionary, then the translator must be trained to do his job with the aid of the computer and/or the dictionary. In TDMS, students are deprived of using dictionary during exams. Moreover, they do not have any subject or class specified to train them how to use dictionaries. The question therefore is how they would be capable of using electronic or paper dictionaries after graduation? Is it self-taught aspect of translation teaching, or what?

Another example of situational teaching could be manifested itself by asking the trainee do authentic TM translations rather than those merely selected by the teacher from the internet or magazines, etc. This teaching technique will help students learn about the real text types they will likely to face after graduation. Additionally, students can be asked to do authentic translation project, of course, under the supervision of their teacher who will act as the proofreader or editor.

2.3. The Curriculum Design:

Bearing the idea of change in mind, curriculum designers must be on alert all the time to identify the changes in the TM and act accordingly. Moreover, they should be systematic and clear with regard to the time span or period that the curriculum lasts before being changed

(Kiraly, 2004). Change here could mean that the curriculum would be reduced, expanded, kept intact, or totally altered, depending on the change (or no change) taking place (see Gabr, 2001).

The changeability of TM will definitely trigger difficulties for the curriculum and course designer as well as the teacher; who can say with any kind of certainty today what the TM will look like ten years from now? Clearly, we have a dilemma here as we try ensuring that our curricula keep up with the global ever-evolving TM (ibid). However, the solution lies in the updateability and adaptability of the diverse players in the educational process. A close metaphor is that of a computer connected to the internet where viruses are abundant; the first urgent requirement for that computer to defend itself against new viruses is a licensed efficient up-to-date updatable antivirus which must be so if it (the computer, or naturally the company which produces it) is to survive in a changeable-on-a-daily-rate computer market.

Another problem that has a gut-link relationship with the issue of the translation curriculum is that of specialization. The unified BA. degree currently given in TDMU, whereby all graduates are qualified as 'translators and interpreters', is misleading with respect to both the expectations of students and the interests of professionals.

It is believed that TDMU must foster this part of its curriculum; the question is How? Before deciding on the student's specialization serious measures must be taken to transfer the TDMU's curriculum into one that is based on current global TM needs and characteristics. Here, one may suggest that more time is assigned (within a whole picture of the curriculum) to the specialization area. It is believed that if the general aspect of the curriculum is condensed and reduced into the first three years and the fourth is allocated to the specialized of it, one could speak of graduating specialized translators or interpreters.

Moreover, two further suggestions to determine the student's specialization may be helpful in this regard; a powerful criterion to decide on the student's specialization is his/her will. Furthermore, translation students' abilities vary in terms of the translation type they best do. Out of the two nodes of translation, namely interpreting and translation, the student could make his/her specific specialization, i.e. sight, consecutive, or simultaneous interpreting or literary, legal, technical, journalistic, or else (written) translation respectively. This suggestion is supported by the fact that such a variation in ability is definitely reflected in the student's marks. There should really be two distinct degree programs, one in translation and the other in interpreting.

2.4. The Learning/Teaching Environment:

Rorty (1979) holds that "individuals have no choice but to create or construct meanings and knowledge through participation in the "interpersonal, intersubjective interaction" that he

elsewhere calls the "conversation of mankind" (ibid.). Knowledge construction, therefore, is an active process involving epistemic agents who seek to construct their own meanings of the world in a socio-cultural milieu. Almost similar to this view of learners' necessary engagement is that held by Jenkins (2000 in Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002) who argues that constructivists of diverse persuasions hold a commitment to the idea that the development of understanding requires active engagement on the part of the learner." These arguments bring us to the question of how to achieve that interaction? A possible solution lies in the idea of teamwork-based classes where students, guided by the teacher, make their world conversation (see Kiraly, 2000:4). A corollary to this is that our educational environment must be changed from one that encourages knowledge-transmission to that that fosters knowledge construction through dialogue. Students' lined desks must be turned into meeting roundtables or networked computers. It is believed that face-to-face interaction, or one eased by wired technology, between groupmates will help them a lot find solutions for their translation problems they may face, therefore, a way to actively, collaboratively, and cooperatively acquire knowledge whether theoretical or practical (Tinzmann et al., 1990; Gabr, 2003; Kiraly, 2004; Pym, 2007).

2.5. The Real Assessors:

One implication of the issue of quality is that trainees must be transparently aware of the criteria or benchmarks against which they themselves, their translations, or any aspect of the translation process in which they are involved are judged during their training. This is ensued out of the fact that translators will be ultimately destined to work on their own, i.e. alone without their teachers; they will be the real autonomous assessors of every bit and piece of the translation process.

Moreover, translators must be trained right from the class to abide by the professional TM standards (DIN 2345, ISO 9002, and the like) already acknowledged by the professional community of which they would be members in the future (see Arevalillo, 2008); this would help bridge the gap(s) between the institutional training and the reality of the profession, adding to the confidence of the trainee himself/herself and to the credibility of the training institution.

3- Conclusion:

In the present paper, the researcher attempts to raise serious questions with regard to the impacts the TM has on the way we train translation students in the TDMU. A quick glance from the reader may recognize that translator training in the department suffers from various sicknesses that require immediate treatment from the translator educationalists. I think from-where-to-start has been identified by the researcher, namely, a careful reading of the TM needs and features that are, later, to be reflected in the TDMU curriculum through the concept of TC.

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